

# The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, September 16. 1693.

Quest. 1. *How a Spaniel should know his Master's Horse?*

**A**nsw. Undoubtedly by the same Means that he knows his Mr. Those subtle Effluvia or Steams by which he Traces either him, or any thing he has but toucht by the Exquiteness of the Organ. So for Example, we our selves, if any Person in the Company has a strong Perfume, may even blindfold trace 'em by it, and distinguish em from all the rest; nay, if with a Pair of Gloves, or some such thing well Perfum'd, they have toucht any thing, tho' we did not see 'em touch it, we may conclude by the smell that they did so, and even distinguish one Perfume from another — and much after the same manner 'tis with these Creatures, endu'd with so excellent a Sense and such rare Qualities for their Master's Benefit, nor their own. To give an Instance in another Sense, 'tis almost incredible how many thousand times an Object may be magnify'd by an excellent Microscope, and what a surprizing difference there is between the same things lookt upon by that and the Naked Eye. Now had we some such Method to strengthen the Sense of Smelling, as we have in seeing, we might undoubtedly make the same distinction between one Otor and another, (which now we can by no means perceive) as a Spaniel does by the Exquiteness of that Sense: Not that Nature has done less for us, take it all together than she has for any other Creature, but indeed rather more, making us capable of distinguishing good and bad Smells, tho' not so exactly the Otor of one Person from another. If any be so foolishly Ungrateful to think this no Benefit, because of the many Ungratefull Smells he meets with, he might full as well Wish to be Blind, that his Eyes might not be polluted with so many Nauseous Objects; to have no Hearing, for fear of Screeks, Scolding, and such grating Noises as would set his Teeth an Edge; and no Taste, to avoid Squills and Coloquintida. But this distinction of Good and Evil Savours we plainly perceive a Dog has not, by the Food that he commonly chooseth; Eastern and Western Civet being much alike to him, unless perhaps he licks his Lips very favourably after the latter, when 'tis likely he won't so much as touch the former.

Quest. 2. *I have sent you in several Questions, but can seldom get any of 'em answer'd; at one time Ten, three of which you have only thought fit to take Notice of — One particularly about the Fresh Bleeding of Dead Bodies when Toucht by the Murderer, whereof I gave you a true and faithful Instance. I speak not this in Anger, but least such things should spoil the Encouragement of your Paper, desiring for the future you'd be more Kind and Carefull in these Matters.*

**A**nsw. First to your Complaint, then to your Question — If you have Three in Ten answer'd, is it not think you very fair, when We have to many by us that 'tis perhaps hardly possible to Answer Three in every Three-score that are yet upon the File; tho' had we filed 'em all, we must have had all the Wire in Crooked-line, or else long Trains of 'em higher than the Monument. For your particular Question about the Bleeding of Dead Bodies, whereof you say you gave us a true and faithful Instance of your own Knowledge, We are mistaken if We han't formerly done something about it, as we believe you'll find if you'll be at the Pains to Consult our Indexes. However, such Instances as these are things we'd so willingly meet with, and might be so Usefull to the World, that we are sorry We have lost it, and that 'tis either mislaid or overlaid by Crowds of others, which tho' of less Value (as 'tis usual) may happen by lying most in View to be soonest taken Notice of: For

which Reasons if you'll please to send it in again, We dare promise it a speedy Answer, and perhaps some Additions of our own; concerning strange Discoveries of Murder.

Quest. 3. *Whether if People wou'd eat more Sallads, Roots and Herbs, and abstain from such Variety of fresh Dyets as is us'd, it wou'd not be more healthfull to the English Constitution, and make us more strong and hearty like our Brethren-in-Unity the Dutch?*

**A**nsw. That there's very much in Dyet, and the Body, nay Mind too, are affected with it, is too plain to be prov'd, or deny'd; and 'tis no improbable Conjecture that the English Dyet, consisting so much in Beef and Mutton, and strong Meats, makes 'em so tight so well, (and we don't see but that they are as stout and strong, as well, as healthy, tho' not so large as other Nations) whence the famous Saying of Prince Maurice, — "That he was always for bringing the English to fight while they had their own Beef in their Bellies; when they were fresh come over, and not reduc'd near the Condition to which the Man brought his Horse. Tho' this Love to Beef is so rooted in the English that 'twill be a very difficult matter to Convert 'em from it; but if you do, have a Care other fashio'd Diet does n't bring 'em to other fashio'd Fighting: Not that our Brethren-in-Unity the Dutch, are the only Countrey who live much on Sallads, for the Jacobites Brethren-in-Iniquity, the French, even in their Prosperity (the Common People we mean, of whom we are now discoursing, were used to Feast on a piece of Bread and a Turnep, but must now be Content to eat their Turnep without Bread, since they han't Men to Till their Ground: Nor yet is't any wonder if the poorer hungry Slaves shou'd Fight desperately when they come to Storm our Camp, since they are in hopes of finding there good Store of Beef and Mutton.

Quest. 4. *Whether I may not be Indifferent to all things but Religion and Loyalty?*

**A**nsw. You might have shortened your Question, and askt it of Religion only: and accordingly we reply — You may be Indifferent to every thing but Religion; tho' this Religion is so Comprehensive a Term, that there's none of Gods Creatures (unless the Devils) which it do's not oblige you to Love, tho' all 'tis true, in different Degrees, but yet the very Name and Notion of Love absolutely destroys Indifference, and 'tis indeed that which is the fulfilling of the whole Law, both of God and Man: Religion obliges you to Loyalty, which is Love to your Prince and Country. Their Interests are linkt and inseparable, like those of the Conjugal Relation (indeed 'tis a Political Marriage, and the Wife has a propriety in our Country, as well as the Husband, however it may be in France, or other less civiliz'd Nations) and it may be said of this as of the other — "Those that God has join'd together, let no man put asunder — and yet still — "If the Unbeliever will depart, let him depart! is true, tho' it be n't Gospel. Then there are a few other things, besides those already mention'd, towards which you can neither Religiously nor so much as prudently be Indifferent: As what think you, Madam! of Domestical Relatives? Have you no Father, Mother, Sisters, Friends, Husband, or Humble Servant? Ought you to be Indifferent here? or if you are so, can you expect they'll be otherwise? and shou'd you like their being so? if not, turn the Cudgels and the case is presently decided. But we are advis'd, to use the World, as not abusing it, those who have Wives to be as if they had none, &c. and several other things sounding the same way, which seem fair-



fairly to imply that such a Stoical *Indifference* is required of us. 'Tis answered, this principally relates to the present necessity, and a time of Persecution, when the Brother was to deliver up the Brother to Death, and the Father the Son, when 'twas extremely requisite to sit more loose from all worldly enjoyments, than when the Church was in happier Circumstances. But neither did this vacate those great Natural, as well as Christian Duties of Constancy, Friendship, tenderness towards our nearer Relations, or even of an universal Charity to all humane Nature. Nay it gave occasion to more noble and surprizing Instances of it, as we may see in Mr. Boyles admirable History of the Martyrdom of St. Theodora (which we could wish we more known and read) and in a thousand other Examples of undoubted Credit, which Church Historians have Recorded, the Christians sure not being Indifferent to one another, when their admirable mutual Faith and Love was turn'd into a Proverb among the very Heathens. But this Indifference makes you cool and easie, above the ordinary weaknesses of Life, infeasible of Fear or Love, or Hatred, or Injuries, or the Calamities of your Self or Friends: Yes, and all this would a Hatchet or a Halter do, or if 'twere but a good sound Dole of Opium; but the Question is, Whether you'd do well in making use of 'em for that Reason? We neither ought to be thus Careless, nor is it desirable to be so, nor lastly (which Clinches all, and makes sure work) neither can we be so should we ne're to much affect or desire it. It's an Injury to our Friends or our Selves not to be concerned at the Miseries and Misfortunes of Life: Compassion is no weakness, but the want of it so great a one, may so great a Crime besides, and of so dangerous a Consequence, that no Person ought to be suffer'd in a Civil Society who is void of it, but to be turn'd out to graze among the suitable Herd of Wolves and Tygers. The want of Concern for the rest of Mankind, or the common Blessings of Life is a great Unhappiness even in those who are proud in thinking they possess it, for the higher degrees of this Indifference they have attain'd to, the more miserable still they are — Their Soul wants its Taste, and Touch, and is as it were in a dead Palsy, none of which would be very desirable to the Body — Ay — but they feel no pain. If true, 'tis but so much the worse — they ought to be Capt and Scarifi'd immediately, that they may feel Pain, and a Sigh or Shrinking a little, would be a hopeful Indication — And hereabouts indeed is the main stress of the matter — There are so many ill Objects, displeasing and mortifying Circumstances that we meet with in the World, till we are arriv'd to this happy State of Indolence, that take bad and good one with another, the good is so outweighed by the bad, that were we not better be without both? No indeed were we not, while two or three of my Granams old Saws hold good, That half a Loaf's better than no Bread, Make the best of a Bad Market, &c. (as you may find in the Memoirs of the grave and prudent Sancha Pancho:) Nor is it true there are more Displeasing Objects than the contrary, for don't we see a hundred sound Faces (outwardly) to one cover'd with Scuffs and Sores; a hundred sound Wind and Limb (as before) to one Cripple, and so of all the other Sentences? only such unpleasing Sights make a greater and more lasting Impression upon us for that very Reason, because they are more rare; the certainty whereof appears from hence, that Chirurgions, or those People who are busied about Hospitals, have this so desirable an Indifference, not being at all mov'd with Sights of this Nature — tho' no more fit to make Fury-men of than some other Trades whom the Law has expressly excluded for the same Reason. Lastly, 'Tis impracticable; there's a wide difference between a Huff and a Person of true Valour; 'tis easie to pretend to this Indifference, but impossible to obtain it. The Blood and Spirits will move about as they are mov'd, and carry the Soul with 'em in spite of all its gruff Philosophy, and whoever says they entirely Possess it, is only an Errant Cheat, and a great Hypocrite.

Quest. 5. When will you Athenians leave Plaguing the World?

Ans. When You and the rest of the World leave Plaguing us; and so your short Question has as short an Answer.

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